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DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM IN THE AREA WITH HIGH NATURAL VALUE (РАЗВИТИЕ ЭКОТУРИЗМА В РАЙОНЕ С ВЫСОКОЙ ПРИРОДООХРАННОЙ ЦЕННОСТЬЮ)

Детально рассматривается понятие экотуризма, выявляются его виды и особенности. На примере национального парка Шумава показывается, как экотуризм становится источником образования не только для посетителей, но и для местных жителей. Также, что не менее актуально и для России, рассматривается зональное строение парка, подчеркиваются особенности рекреационной эксплуатации каждой из его зон.

Introduction

In our paper we would like to focus on ecotourism which becomes still more and more popular nowadays. First, we try to define this term in the context where we would need it in the other parts of this paper. Then, we will continue describing a concrete area which we have chosen. It is The Šumava National Park which is the largest national park in the Czech Republic. We would like to identify some types of ecotourism which are practised here and which are possible to establish in the other countries as well. For example, in some nature areas in Russia.

Ecotourism

To understand particular forms of ecotourism, it is necessary to understand what this term exactly stands for. Ecotourism means responsible traveling to the natural areas. It conserves the environment as well as welfare of local inhabitants (Palatková, 2011). One of the main features of ecotourism is for instance nature-based environmentally benign way to garner funds for conservation and local development. Ecotourism

is also a source of education, not only for visitors but also for local residents. Its purpose is also promoting increased respect for different cultures. “A critical question, however, is whether the ecotourism projects themselves are on a sustainable path in terms of the triple bottom line of economic, environmental and socio-cultural development” (Baral, Stern, Hammett, 2012).

There is a crucial problem which is associated with sustainable development and ecotourism and that is a conflict between conservation of biological diversity, support of economical development and social stability of local community (Perlín, Bičík, 2010).

Considering all mentioned above, it is the reason of establishing protected areas and national parks. By the recreational, aesthetic and scientific valences, there is an exceptional natural area in the Czech Republic the Šumava National Park, which is an important touristic attraction.

The Šumava National Park

The Šumava mountains is a mountain range located along the

south-west border of the Czech Republic, namely along the border with Germany and Austria. “This densely wooded landscape, comprising crystal clear mountain streams, unspoiled marshlands, mires and bog woodlands, and abandoned mountain pastures at high altitudes, is a refuge for many endangered species of animals and plants” (Perlín, Bičík, 2010). There are several endangered species, such as lynx, moose, otter, peregrine or freshwater pearl mussel which are protected by Natura 2000. Overall nature is protected in the Bavarian Forest National Park and in the Šumava National Park (Bláha, Romportl, Křenová, 2013). In view of the fact that the quality of nature in the Šumava National Park is also important in international level, was this national park in 1990 classified into the international network of Unesco Biosphere Reserves (including the whole region of Šumava – NP Šumava, CHKO Šumava).

The Šumava National Park is with its 680 square kilometres the biggest national park in the Czech Republic. It is also named “green heart of Europe” because of the

most extensive uninterrupted complex of forest which we can find here. The Šumava National Park was declared on the 20th March 1991. The area of national park is used for scientific and educational purposes but it is also very popular among tourists. But all utilization of national park is focused on preservation and improvement of natural conditions (Výroční zpráva, 2012).

The national park is divided into three zones, which are different in the level of protection. The first zone is strictly protected nature area including the most valuable and stable natural ecosystem and it is passed down to unaffected progress without human influence. The second zone is represented by a forest and other ecosystems that are necessary to protect in the way of managing to unaffected balance. And the last, third zone includes areas changed by human beings where tourism, recreation and constant housing is allowed and supported. We would like to concentrate especially on the third one.

Tourism and Šumava belong together

Tourism is an economic sector which each day more and more depends on nature to survive. The responsibility for keeping environmental quality of tourist destinations is to be handled by all of us, including the tourists themselves (Tojeiro, 2011). The tourism in Šumava National Park has long-time history. It has always been a part of local economy, even when it used to have a different share on economy during the years. After 1990 the tourism has become a main development factor because of increasing importance of protected area with natural value as

a base for urban recreation (Těšitel, Kušová, Bartoš, 2007)

Since 1996 turnout has increased up three times higher in the Šumava National Park. In that case, there is a need to manage the sustainable development of these areas today. The role of tourism as development factor and the relationship between tourism and protection of biodiversity is such a complex problem that has become a part of many projects which common content is sustainable tourism (for example the project "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity through Sound Tourism Development in Biosphere Reserves in Central and Eastern Europe.")

Just in NP there are 500 km of hiking trails and 400 km of bicycle trails which bring an enjoyment to people visiting the largest national park of the Czech Republic (Tourism and biodiversity in the Šumava Biosphere Reserve, 2012). Since 2012 tourists could have used also the "Hiking trails through nature and time". The bicycle trails have the marked trails too which make the large network through the area of national park. On the one hand, the bicycle tourism is an opportunity to ecotourism connected with getting to know the area but on the other hand it represents potential and still more actual danger of damaging the national park's environment, for example in the way of aggressive breakthrough to distantly hard accessible areas and becoming cycling more and more mass character activity (Těšitel, Kušová, Bartoš, 2007). This could be a problem for nature protection and because of this fact there is a trend of ecotourism which becomes very popular nowadays.

Forms of ecotourism

The term "ecotourism" is quite wide and there are many of its forms, for example nature guides, using horses or green buses. The project Horse return in Šumava is based on using horses for hard work in the forest, so there is no hard machinery at all. And for tourist's horse rides in landscape. Another interesting project is Green bus and it means using the ecological buses as a transport in protected area. Thanks to this there is less road transport and exhaust fumes. Also the environmental education is realised in Šumava through 3 specialised centres. And in cooperation with local stakeholders is prepared the brand "Šumava Original Product". The original products are handmade and produced in a traditional way from local materials.

We would like to focus especially on one of them which is typical for the Šumava National Park. It is called "Landscape guides" and it is realized by Administration of the Šumava National Park. As common beneficiaries of ecotourism, guides may provide visitors with a more positive window on ecotourism outcomes. Nature guides are considered to be the "heart of ecotourism" owing to their role in environmental interpretation and ecotourism success (Drumm, Moore, 2005). The main idea of this project is: "A person can not overlook things which he really knows and he can protect everything what he appreciates." This idea is realized by local people who know the Šumava landscape very well and who were specially trained for guiding. Since 2006 there were eighty-one people who went through these trainings and so they have

necessary knowledge for guiding in the Šumava National Park.

Every one of these guides show you local nature from different point of view because he or she has their own close relation which they would try to move on you. Then the best result is when you can identify with their ideas. But there is not only one type of guide who you can pay for professional services. We can distinguish professional, local, boating guides and also

the ones for guiding in Šumava's wilderness. But primary goal is the same for all of them and that is explanation of nature relations and understanding mutual interactions of human and nature. (www.npsumava.cz, 2014).

Conclusion

We cleared the background of ecotourism and the Šumava National Park up because we suppose that it is very important when you

want to understand why landscape guides exist. The biggest advantage is that the nature conservation in this way is not very expensive because the only thing which is essential to pay is training of guides. We think that this type of ecotourism is a very useful one and it can definitely be a good inspiration not only for the others national parks in the Czech Republic but also for the others states. And of course Russia is not an exception.

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